

Swamp Canyon Abandoned Mine Land Physical Safety Closure Project Project Scoping

The Norwood Ranger District, Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG) proposes to physically close three abandoned mine features under a project called *Swamp Canyon Abandoned Mine Land Physical Safety Closure Project*. The project includes sites on National Forest System (NFS) lands in San Miguel County, Colorado. The project area is located about a mile southeast of the town of Ophir. Access to the features will be on existing mine roads, and then hiking on existing trails and cross-country routes to the locations. The three planned closure sites are in T. 42 N., R. 9 W., section 36 and T. 41 N., R. 9 W., sections 1 and 2, N.M.P.M, and are described in the following table.

The GMUG proposes this project in cooperation with the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (DRMS). The project would be implemented in 2020 under a contract administered by DRMS. The stabilization and removal of mine hazards benefits both agencies by making these lands safer for the public.

In order to maintain the mining legacy, mining related materials will be left where they are found as much as possible. No removal or cleanup of mining related material will be done at the sites.

A screening process for the suitability of each mine site for bat habitat was completed. Suitable sites will be closed with a bat-friendly grate or comparable systems designed to allow ingress/egress.

Closure Information:

Closure methods may include bulkheads, bat-friendly grates, polyurethane foam (PUF) and backfill. Minor amounts of nearby waste rock material will be used for bulkhead and backfill closures. The work will be performed by a small, 2-4 person work crew utilizing only hand construction techniques.

Access to the sites will use motorized vehicles on existing mine roads off Forest Road 630 (Ophir Pass Road), and then by non-motorized travel either on foot or with pack animals on existing trails (Waterfall Canyon FS Trail #633 and Swamp Canyon FS Trail #634) and/or cross-country routes on NFS lands. The contractor may camp in or near the project area on NFS lands and the contractor shall identify and notify Forest Service of camping location(s) at least 2 weeks prior to initiating project work.

Swamp Canyon Abandoned Mine Land Physical Safety Closure Site Table

Site No.	Feature Type	Location (Lat/Long)	Elevation	Closure Method
Site 5	Adit	N 37° 51' 11.56"	10,151'	backfill or bulkhead
		W 107° 49' 13.19"		
Site 12	Adit	N 37° 51' 4.50"	10,390'	backfill or bulkhead w/ possible bat grate*
		W 107° 49' 1.34"		

Site 14	Adit	N 37° 50' 45.83"	11,219'	steel grate or bulkhead w/bat gate or bat window*
		W 107° 49' 30.89"		

* mine sites that may receive bat-compatible or bat-friendly closure features if determined feasible during DRMS contractor's pre-bid field visit

BACKFILL: a seal using local rock material adjacent to the mine opening to refill the excavated feature

BULKHEAD: an upright, wall-like structure consisting of cement and/or PUF and/or local rock material

GATE OR GRATE – an open metal gate and/or grate, usually secured with bedrock anchors and/or concrete footers

PUF: polyurethane foam, expandable foam used to fill void space in the mine and then backfilled with dirt or local rock material to secure the opening

Best Management Practices:

The operator will power-wash all equipment including ATVs/OHVs, lowboy or other trailers to remove noxious weed seeds. Equipment shall be cleaned prior to entering the Forest and is subject to inspection by the Forest Service representative or Contracting Officer.

The operator is subject to the GMUG Travel Management Plan. Any project-related travel beyond that allowed to the general public will need an Access Authorization from the Forest Service.

Camping: Any FS campsite(s) will be kept clean. All food waste will be secured from wildlife and all trash shall be disposed of at a permitted landfill facility. Portable toilets will be provided by the contractor for use by the crew at the campsite.

Archeological discoveries: The operator shall immediately notify the Forest Service of all antiquities or other objects of historic or scientific interest, including but not limited to historic or prehistoric ruins or artifacts discovered in connection with the project. These discoveries shall remain intact and in place until directed otherwise by the Forest Service.

The Forest Service will approve seed mix(es) for site reclamation.

Responsible Official:

The responsible official making the decision on this project is Megan Eno, Norwood District Ranger.

How to Comment and Timeframe:

The Forest Service invites comments on this proposal. Comments may be submitted as follows:

- hand-delivered or mailed to the Norwood Ranger District, ATTN: Spencer Haley – Swamp Canyon AML Physical Safety Closure Project Comments, P.O. Box 388, 1150 Forest Street, Norwood, CO 81423
- E-mail to: comments-rocky-mountain-gmug@usda.gov
- Fax to: 970-327-4854, ATTN: Spencer Haley - Swamp Canyon AML Physical Safety Closure Project Comments

To be most useful, comments should be received by close of business, April 16, 2020.